

Goodbyes

by DeBrabant

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Summary: Sequel to "Gained and Lost". Wolf buries his friend, and he and Virginia bond through the pain...

Goodbyes

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>by Danii
Disclaimer: I don't own anybody here. They are the property of NBC and other people. I get no profit from this... It's just for fun.

>Rating: PG...if you saw the miniseries you can deal with this...

Characters: Virginia, Wolf, Huntsman (even if he's dead)

>Warning: This is a sequel to "Gained and Lost", so if you didn't read that, you will have absolutely NO idea what I'm talking about. You will wonder who is William...and I will not tell you...Okay, I will, but please, read the other one if you haven't...

Dedication: To every Forever Knight fan and 10th Kingdom fan who gets off their butt to either a) keep the series alive with fanfiction, or b) keeps the series alive by writing letters asking for more.

>Mood: a bit sad, but hey...
Time: takes place the day of the banquet with King Wendell with the medals

>This isn't my finest stuff, but when inspiration hits you, you punch it back for all you're worth . I have a lovehate relationship with my muse, who's had one too many Blueberry Daquiris... Came out all right though...

>Goodbyes
by Danii

>Where was Wolf? There was only three hours left till the party and she couldn't find him anywhere! She didn't know where he could possibly be, and he wasn't even dressed yet. That she knew. The nice black and white suit the King had given him was still sitting on their bed where he had put it that morning. So where was he?

Virginia got her answer when she happened to peer out the castle window. He was outside, near a little patch of trees in the rear of the palace, and he was filling in a hole. He had no shirt on, and he was sweating a great deal; while she admired the view, and longed for a little more later on, she had no idea what he was doing out there.

What was he filling in, and why? He was working quickly, his arms moving faster than she thought possible, the muscles in his back rippling in a way quite pleasant to her eyes. She reminded herself how luck she was to have found a wonderful man who loved her so much. It amazed her how much her life had changed since she had come to this magical place. And it truly was a magical place, for it was here that she found the man she loved. But all that reflection didn't answer her question. What was he doing?

>Virginia made her way down the stairs, out the castle and to the little grove, walking slowly so as not to startly Wolf. When she got there, Wolf had finished, and was replacing his shirt with his back to her. The shovel he had been using was sitting on the ground, and at the head of the little mound of dirt, she could see a little wooden marker. She was too far away to read the name though, and the question dug through her mind. Who was Wolf burying?
"He was a good man, once..." Wolf said suddenly, his back still to her. It startled her a bit. Virginia didn't think she would ever get used to the fact that her love could sense her presence. But the question remained.

>"Who, Wolf?" she asked, "Who was a good man?"
"William..." The name was said slowly, as if he hadn't been used for many years. Something out of the past. His past. Virginia could tell is it was something very painful. She didn't mean to pry, to pull his anguish into the light even more painfully than it already had been, but something in her demanded an answer.

>"Who was William?" she inquired carefully.
"You knew him, or rather, met him. You were in his home for little while. But you didn't know his name. You never knew his name. Sometimes I think I'm the only person alive who knew his name..." The last was a bitter laugh, so full of grief and anger, it put a chill into Virginia's spine. The last time he had talked like that, he had been half-insane from the full moon and losing his self-control. She backed away unconsciously.

>"Don't. I'm not going to hurt you. I love you. It's just that..." Wolf seemed to be at a loss for words. So he howled. He howled, long and hard, filling the animal call with every ounce of agony he could. The sound reached Virginia's ears and touched her heart. She didn't just hear it, she felt it. There was so much pain in that howl, as if the whole of the world's sorrows was being expressed in that one long, anguished note. He stopped, and listened for a second, hearing his grief echoing through the sky, then collapsed to the ground, weeping like a child. Virginia rushed over and put her arms around his sobbing form. Wolf looked up, his eyes filled with tears, and held to her tightly for a moment, then gently pushed her away.

"I'm all right..." he said, wiping the liquid from his eyes with a shirt sleeve, "But it hurts, you know?"

>Virginia nodded, definitely understanding Wolf's grief. Whoever he had lost had been important to him, and the loss of her mother by her own hand left her with an awareness of how painful it was to loss someone that close forever. But who was it?
"Wolf, "she asked finally, walking over to him and taking his hand, "Who is in the grave?"

>"His name was once William Huntsman. He was a hunter and tracker in the woods near Rivertown. He had a wife named Gytha, and a son named Shawn. I got to know them as a young boy because I attended school near there. I bumped into him one day, and he befriended me. He introduced me to his son and wife, who also became my friends. They became my second family, the only ones who didn't share my blood, but accepted me all the same. I learned how to cook from Gytha. Shawn taught me many things, including the value of a friend. And William

taught me to be a man, instead of just a wolf. And then, he made one bad decision and destroyed all that...That decision cost him his son, his wife, and a friend: me."
An idea was forming in her mind, but it wasn't done. It looked like telling all this was painful to Wolf, but she had to know. More than that, she knew from experience, he had to deal with it, and now was as good a time as ever. She urged him on with a nod.

>"As I said, you met him. But not as William. He was no longer William. You knew him, like the rest of the world did, as The Huntsman."
Virginia gasped. Of all the people...and yet... She remembered the story the Huntsman had told her up in the tree-house, of the queen giving him the crossbow, of killing his own son. And it made sense. Except for one thing...

>"If he was your friend, why did you want to kill him?"

Grief-filled eyes met her with a gaze she wished to God she would never have to see again. She couldn't deal with that much concentrated pain. He didn't answer for a moment, but when he did, he went slowly. "It was his last request. The day he killed Shawn. He asked me to kill him. But I couldn't. I wasn't the same then, I was much more... naive, more...soft. I couldn't do the one thing he asked me to do and it cost him years of living as he did, a human hound for the queen..."

>It was so like what she had to deal with. So similar it made her heart ache. He had lost someone too, someone he loved to evil, and unlike her, he had been painfully aware of it for all that time. She couldn't imagine how he could have dealt with that knowledge for all those years. Sometimes, she knew, she dehumanized him, made him simply a character in her mind. But it was things like this that showed her just how wrong she was. He had emotions, and rather strong ones at that. But he covered the more painful ones up to keep her happy, to let her go about her business without worrying about him. He loved her that much. And she loved him too. And with that love, came an understanding of his pain. He'd had to kill his friend. Just as she'd killed her mother with that comb, he had killed the Huntsman with the crossbow. They both had grief, such horrible grief, but it comforted Virginia to know they would work on it together.

"He could have killed me, you know?" Wolf said at last, his arm wrapped protectively around her, even though it was he who needed it this time, "But he didn't. He could have pointed that crossbow at me easy, but he didn't. He let me..."

>"She could have sliced my throat," Virginia said suddenly as she realized it. "She could have cut my throat and killed me in an instant. But she tried to strangle me instead..."

As they each finished their thoughts, both turned toward the other and smiled. While the world thought of those they loved as villains, they knew in their hearts who these people were. A confused girl who didn't know what to do, or who to turn to. A loving husband who only wanted the best for his wife and child. A woman who really did love her child, but was unable to deal with the responsibility. A father who made one mistake. A mother who showed just what she felt, even if it was too late. A friend who saved a life with his last act, instead of destroying one.

>And as the bell tolled from the castle's highest tower, a peace filled their hearts. They would never truly get over the deaths, they knew. But with love, luck, time, and growth, they would be able to live with what they had done. With what had been done to them. With what they had lost. And they would face it together. No longer alone, and bereft of love, but strengthened by it, the one thing that truly heals all wounds.

Fin

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End
file.